

Quantitative Analysis of the Influence of Affective Commitment on the Performance of Administrative Staff in Tertiary Institutions, Anambra States

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ABSTRACT: Enhancing the performance of administrative staff necessitated this study. The study quantitatively analyzed the influence of affective commitment on the job performance of administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. One research question and one null hypothesis were tested at a 0.05 significant level, guiding the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design with a population of 544 administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra state studied without sampling. A 10-10-item questionnaire titled "Influence of Affective Commitment on the Performance of Administrative Staff (IAC-PAS)" was used for data collection. The face and content validity of the instrument were determined by two experts in business education, measurement, and evaluation. Trail testing was used to establish the instrument's reliability, and data were analyzed using Cronbach alpha reliability, which yielded a coefficient value of .81. The researchers, with the help of three research assistants, administered copies of the questionnaire to the respondents. Out of the 544 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 528(97%) copies were correctly filled and returned and used for data analysis. Statistical mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question and determine the homogeneity of the respondents' ratings, and a t-test was used to test the null hypothesis. Findings revealed that administrative staff agree that affective commitment influences their performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Age did not significantly influence respondents' mean ratings on the influence of affective commitment on the performance of administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Based on the study's findings, the researchers concluded that building a working environment that promotes affective commitment can improve the performance of administrative staff of tertiary institutions in Anambra State to a very high level. Therefore, it was recommended that the management of tertiary institutions in Nigeria provide regular organizational support programs for administrative staff to better develop their personal and career objectives and improve their affective commitment and job performance.

KEYWORDS: Influence, Affective Commitment, Performance, Administrative Staff

INTRODUCTION

Human resources are widely regarded as one of the most important assets of any organization because they drive it forward; and without them, nothing can be accomplished. As a result, every organization must make the best use of available human resources to achieve goals. Although, employees have many personal goals, these objectives are unified at the organizational level. This unity of purpose is not accidental; rather, it is the result of the organization's and employees' commitment to work in the same direction. Given this, the management of an organization must determine how closely employees identify with, and are loyal to its goals. In addition, the management must identify and address factors that can impact job performance to ensure that employees give their best to achieve set goals through commitment.

Commitment is the foundation of any organization, and plays important role in determining its success. Bhatt (2020) defined commitment as an employee's trait of being wholly devoted to a task, or level of enthusiasm for assigned tasks. As asserted by Chiu (2020) variables, such as job satisfaction, physical workplace, leadership styles, and most importantly, organizational commitment can impact employees' performance. Organizational commitment as viewed by Zayas-Ortiz et al. (2015) is the tool that a manager uses to analyze employee identification with the organization. It shows that an employee's goal is the same as, or similar to an organization's goals. Organizational commitment can help an organization to retain talented employees, and achieve goals since employees feel connected to the organization (Alrowwad, et al, 2019). Determinants of organizational commitment include; strong desire to stay in the organization, acceptance of the organization's values, and willingness to work hard to achieve organizational goals. Al Zefeiti and Mohamad (2017) noted that these determinants are embedded in the three key components of organizational commitment namely; affective, continuance and normative commitment.

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Affective commitment is the propensity for employees to stick with their organization because of emotional connection to it. Affective commitment is high when employees regularly volunteer for additional training or responsibilities, attend all work-related events and social gatherings outside of work hours, and arrive early and stay until the end of the shift (Al zefeiti & Mohammad 2017). It is also evident when employees refrain from criticizing leaders of their tertiary institution, feel sad when the institution does not meet goals, take institution's policies and regulations seriously, and stays at their current job even offered new and higher paying jobs elsewhere (Teimouri, 2022).

Affective commitment is a critical issue that administrators of tertiary institutions in Nigeria need to understand to tackle issues of poor performance effectively. In agreement, Ezenwakwelu (2017) stressed the need for academic studies in an area of affective commitment as they could assist organizations to understand antecedents that enhance employees' job performance. It has recently received much attention among human resource management experts globally. Al Zefeiti and Mohamad (2017) stated that affective commitment has become one of the most popular work attitudes studied by academic researchers due to its impact on organizational outcomes.

One major problem tertiary institutions in Nigeria face is loss of skillful and experienced employees who feel that their well-being could be better cared for elsewhere. Ake (2019) observed with dismay that most employees in tertiary institutions in Nigeria are not committed to their jobs, attributing it to lack of affective commitment. As reported by Ayinde (2021), there was an issue of lack of commitment to goals among staff of Nigerian tertiary institutions. Obeidat et al. (2017) found high rate of employee's retention and poor performance due to lack of organizational commitment.

Employee performance is the accomplishment of goals set by an organization. It describes the level of initiative, effort, upholding of standards, and devotion shown by employees while carrying out their duties (Koskei, 2017). Employees' performance can be quantified in terms of how successfully or poorly an employee performs assigned tasks, or quickly complete deadlines (Folorunso et al., 2014). The main problem facing many tertiary institutions in Nigeria is how to enhance employees' performance (Evwierhurhoma & Oga, 2020). Poor staff performance in most public tertiary institutions in Nigeria, Anambra State inclusive is a source of concern to educational stakeholders. Noorhayati et al. (2017) attributed it to lack of organizational commitment. Shanka and Adebola (2021) claimed that productivity in tertiary institutions depends on employees' commitment. Indigo (2023) and Adejare et al. (2021) were critical of poor attitudes of most workers (administrative staff inclusive) in Anambra State tertiary institutions. Onyekwelu and Amuluche (2021) regretted that in most instances, the contributions of employees in tertiary institutions are not always taken into account or implemented resulting to employees' non-challant attitude to works, and poor performance.

Administrative staff of tertiary institutions are individuals who are involved in the day-to-day operations of any office, and perform clerical works, manage information and files within the office (Anioke, 2021). They include managers, student welfare workers, secretaries, caretakers and cleaners. Administrative staff are categorized into executive assistants and administrative assistants. Executive assistants support directors, executives, and other higher level employees with their administrative needs. Administrative assistants, on the other hand, are professional secretaries who support the administrative heads in organizing and completing tasks. Their duties include organizing meetings for Administrators, greeting office visitors and composing documents on behalf of the administrators.

Furthermore, age of the administrative staff may influence the affective commitment of administrative staff's performance compared to younger employees (18–39 years old). It is expected that elder administrative staff (40 years and older) will be more committed to the institutions' goals. However, over the years, experts have disagreed on the moderating impact of age on organizational commitment. Mukti & George (2018) observed that organizational commitment is higher in the early age of workers. Contradicting the findings of Khurshid and Parveen (2015) reported that older workers were more committed as compared to younger workers. In view of the need to improve job performance of administrative staff in tertiary institutions, this study quantitatively analyzed the influence of affective commitment on the job performance of administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The related literature was organized under the following sub-heading;

- ❖ Concept of affective commitment
- ❖ Advantages of affective commitment

Affective Commitment

Affective commitment refers to the extent to which the employee wants to remain with an organization and cares about the organization. It can also be seen as an employee's positive emotional attachment to the organization.

Affective commitment makes employees feel happier and more emotionally connected to the organization /institution as a result of their membership. It is their acceptance of it as a member of their family and their loyalty to it. Because they wish to collaborate, complete their jobs, and make adjustments to their abilities to further the aims of the organization or institution, it is referred to as the employees' identification with, involvement in, and connection to their organizations (Kassaw & Golga, 2019). Affective

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commitment also is the employees' emotional attachment to the organization's concepts. If employees have a high level of affective commitment, they are more likely to stick around because they enjoy the interactions with the organization. They continue to stay because they want to.

Additionally, employees with a high level of emotional commitment will perform well, be less likely to be absent from work, and are more likely to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviours such as supporting the organization and assisting others. Koskei (2017) in Meyer and Allen attached affective commitment (AC) as the "desire" component of organizational commitment. Meyer and Allen stated that an employee who is affectively committed strongly identifies with the goals of the organization and desires to remain a part of the organization or institution. These employees remain in the organization because they want to be committed. Mercurio (2015) posited that affective commitment was found to be an enduring, demonstrably indispensable, and central characteristic of organizational commitment.

Additionally, a worker who is affectively committed will remain in an organization because they have a deep desire to be a part of it. The employee's emotional commitment to the company is known as emotional commitment (Koskei, 2017). It is also an emotive desire of employees to remain employed by an organization. It includes commitment to the organization as well as deep care for its well-being, according to Koskei (2017) in Shurbagi & Zahari. Affective commitment, according to Qaisar et al. (2012), is based on how employees feel about and engage with an organization. It can be interpreted as an employee's emotional connection to the organization. As a result, the employee clearly understands the organization's objectives and agrees to stay as a member. Effectively devoted employees will have a strong desire to continue being a part of an organization (Koskei, 2017). As a result, an employee who is effectively dedicated to an organization or who displays emotion in relation to it believes in its mission and core values, puts in much effort, and plans to stick with it. Davies (2015) found that certain employees go above and beyond what appears to be necessary in terms of effort for the expected reward and linked this to the affective component of affective commitment.

According to Chimona and Dhrub (2015), there is a relationship between affective commitment and increased output, staff productivity, and other types of efficiency. It is because committed employees focus their attention on the task at hand and are less likely than others to leave the organization; in view of this, supervisors should promote effective commitment. Affective commitment and job experiences correlate, according to Koskei (2017). Employees feel more emotionally at ease and have a greater sense of competence as a result. Employees who are deeply engaged in their organization may have a strong desire to remain a part of it.

Additionally, because they want to stay with the organization, employees with great affective commitment are happy while working there. They are likely to pursue the goals and objectives of the organization because they agree with them. Affective commitment may be a crucial factor for workers who plan to quit their jobs. It is influenced by a number of psychological elements, such as reason, conventional wisdom, causal acceptance, reciprocity, and personal fulfilment (Sharma & Sanha, 2015).

Scales (2018) stated that employees with high affective commitment are probably encouraging others in the organization to work harder. Employees who radiate affective commitment enjoy their jobs more and contribute to the growth of the workforce both inside and outside of the organization. As a result of their positive relationship with the organization, employees who have a high degree of affective commitment can help other employees have higher levels of affective commitment as well, making them brand ambassadors for the company Scales, (2010) in Slack et al. Affective commitment really generates personal goals that align with organizational objectives. Because there are no conflicts of interest, as both the single employee and the organization, as a whole, gain from this. Affective commitment is a significant predictor of employees' job success, claimed Abdullah et al. (2017).

Employees who show affection for the organization perform better than those who do not. On the other hand, Affective obligation is a key marker of withdrawal behaviour in a setting (Koskei, 2017). Koskei noted that many studies have been done on the connection between affective commitment and worker performance. According to Ukadike (2019), both extrinsic rewards (pay satisfaction, working conditions, and fringe benefits) and internal rewards (role clarity, involvement, and feedback) have a significant impact on successful commitment. Similarly, according to Benkarim and Imbeau (2021), affective commitment is derived from an individual's intrinsic factors, which include, as encapsulated in the sense of accomplishment, personal and professional growth, and acknowledgement, as well as overall job satisfaction. Affective commitment is typically regarded as an essential component of corporate commitment, as high emotive go above and above what is required under contract in order to keep the organization running efficiently.

Strong acceptance of the organization's objectives and beliefs, a readiness to go above and beyond for it, and a desire to stay as a member are all traits of affective commitment. The employee identifies strongly with the organization's aims, objectives, and values, which instils a sense of pride in being a part of it (Salazar-Fierro & Bayardo, 2015). When the parties to an employment contract have a friendly relationship and want to keep it that way, it involves psychological phenomena, emotional bonds, a sense of togetherness, and the desire to fulfil the organization's aims and objectives (Breitsohl & Ruhle, 2013). A crucial element of the continuous improvement process is affective commitment since it encourages workers to identify with the company's culture and values and put in greater effort to accomplish the objectives of the organization (Benkarim & Imbeau, 2021). This kind of dedication is crucial for all types of organizations as it enables them to create prosperous and long-term planning.

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Additionally, the interest in affective commitment stems from the fact that it offers many advantages to businesses and employees alike. Among these advantages are listed below:

Performance: Performance refers to the accomplishment of the organizational goal regardless of the type and variety of organizational goals. Benkarim and Imbeau (2021) believed that there is a strong correlation between affective commitment and performance and that employees with strong affective commitment may be driven by meeting organizational /institutional goals, which could account for this correlation.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB): Organizational citizenship behaviour is a behaviour that is not part of an employee's job but makes the organization a better place to work. Examples include helping others and staying extra time after work for the success of the organization. This idea relates to workers' creative and impulsive actions as well as their readiness to work together (Katz in Benkarim & Imbeau, 2021). The body of research supports the presence of a beneficial relationship between organizational citizenship practices and affective commitment. The affective commitment of employees, according to a recent study by Danish et al. (2015), is a component that enhances their organizational citizenship behaviours.

Job satisfaction: Job satisfaction is the attitude employee has towards their job. i.e. how happy they are in what they do. Positive relationships exist between affective commitment and job satisfaction (Ampofo, 2020; Donald et al, 2016). Benkarim and Imbeau (2021) see job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state coming from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. The feeling of connection and belonging to the organization plays a role in this happiness. The more dedicated employees are in the business, the happier they are. Job satisfaction, therefore, increases as affective commitment increases (Saha & Kumar, 2018).

Turnover: Turnover simply means the Intention to resign from the organization. The reasons for organizational turnover are that the employee does not feel happy any longer and wants to transfer elsewhere, secondary if the company lack advancement or fails to grow. Thirdly, if there are unmet needs, such as psychological or physical needs, Workers are not friendly to one another or have no safety in the company. He also concluded that organizations must try to reduce turnover by finding out while employees are going and trying to tackle the problem immediately.

Several researchers discovered a negative association between affective commitment and turnover (Gillet et al., 2015). Strongly committed personnel are less likely to leave the company, which explains why there is a negative correlation between them. Therefore, raising the amount of effective commitment could aid in lowering an organization's turnover rate. Affective commitment actually displays a propensity to stick around the organization, according to its definition. It follows that turnover, which represents the intention to willingly quit the company, is negatively correlated with it.

Absenteeism: Affective commitment has a negative relationship with absenteeism (Kim & Beehr, 2018). Employees who have a strong affective commitment do not frequently miss work, which could account for the negative link. In other words, less dedicated workers would miss more days of work. Barrick and Zimmerman (2005) submitted that organizations could tackle/reduce absenteeism by;

- a. disciplining employees for absenteeism,
- b. keeping better attendance and a clear policy.
- c. Rewarding attendance by giving financial bonuses, business games, well-paid part-time programmes, and
- d. Reducing absenteeism by not employing "Absence-prone" employees.

Presenteeism: Presenteeism is the practice of an employee reporting for work but not being completely functional and productive because of illness, accident, or other health issues. (Werapitiya et al.,2016). The negative relationship between affective commitment and presenteeism may have several causes. In the first place, they define *presenteeism* as the antithesis of emotive commitment. The former prevents the accomplishment of corporate goals, whereas the latter gives them priority. Employees who display great affective commitment are more likely to adopt behaviours that are advantageous to the firm, according to Yang et al. (2017), which increases performance and decreases presenteeism). Lastly, there is a low presenteeism rate among employees who are effectively dedicated.

Statement of the Problem

The administrative staff of tertiary institutions is the support system on which the success of the academicians, students and institutions relies. The ability of tertiary institutions in Nigeria to meet their academic service delivery goals depends very much on the performance of the administrative staff. However, the general lackadaisical attitude of most administrative staff in carrying out their jobs has drawn criticism from educational stakeholders. Inefficiency has nearly become a household term used to describe some tertiary institutions, not just in Anambra State but throughout Nigeria. The low performance of the administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Nigeria especially Anambra State means that the enormous resources that governments spend on these institutions are wasted. Experts and researchers have reported that variables including work environment, leadership style, training and development, and tools and equipment, influence employees' performance in tertiary institutions. The researcher hypothesized the administrative staff performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State may be influence by affective commitment variable.

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Though, there has been discussion among scholars about how affective commitment could potentially influence performance, however, there remain divergent opinions among them. While some researchers discovered that affective commitment does not influence performance, others noticed that it does. The pursuit of this information is crucial since it would boost the efficiency of administrative staff in tertiary institutions. Hence, in specific term, this study quantitatively analyzed (1) the influence of affective commitment on the performance of administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

Research Question

The following research question guided the study;

1. What is the influence of affective commitment on performance of the administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State?

Null Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of administrative staff on the influence of affective commitment on their performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

METHOD

The research design adopted in this study was survey design. The study was conducted in Anambra State, South East, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of 544 administrative staff in the public tertiary institutions in Anambra State (Source: Academic Planning Units of the various public tertiary institutions in Anambra State as at 10th December, 2023). There was no sampling since the population was manageable and accessible to the researchers. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Influence of Affective Commitment on the Performance of Administrative Staff (IAC-PAS)", and has two sections: A and B. Section A contained one item on demographic information of the respondents, such as age while section B contained 10 items which sought information on the influence of affective commitment on the performance of administrative staff. The IAC-PAS was structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and strongly Disagree (SD).

The face and content validity of the instrument was determined by three experts in the field of Business Education and Measurement and Evaluation. The internal consistency of the instrument was established through trial testing, and data obtained from their responses were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha reliability co-efficient which yielded coefficient value of .81. The researchers, with the help of three research assistants administered copies of the questionnaire to the respondents. Out of the 544 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 528(97%) copies were correctly filled and returned and used for data analysis. Statistical mean and standard deviation were used to answer the five research questions and establish the homogeneity of the respondents' ratings. t-Test was used to test the null hypothesis at .05 level of significance. In testing the null hypotheses, when the p-value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis was rejected. Otherwise, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Data analysis was carried out using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0.

RESULTS

Table 1. Respondents' Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation on Influence of Affective Commitment on Performance of Administrative Staff

S/N	Items statements	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
1	The happiness I feel working in this institution has increased my desire to take on extra job responsibilities	3.55	.58	Strongly Agree
2	I always come up with creative solutions to office problems since I feel the institution's problems are my own	3.25	.59	Agree
3	Lack of opportunities to contribute my ideas during work meetings reduces my performance at work	3.43	.50	Agree
4	Lack of feeling of closeness towards my institution prevent me from taking up a challenging task when available	3.25	.44	Agree
5	My plan of retiring from this institution leads me to carry out more office tasks than is expected of me	3.30	.46	Agree
6	I am not too excited about new challenges in my office because the institution does not mean much personally to me	3.35	.48	Agree
7	The feeling of pride in an institution leads to more interactions with the public and customers regarding the organization's products and services	3.53	.53	Strongly Agree
8	The inspiration an institution has on the employees influence the way employees perform office work well with minimum effort	3.28	.55	Agree
9	Enjoyment of the day-to-day interactions with co-workers leads to setting right priorities for tasks to achieve institutional goals	3.25	.49	Agree

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10	The deep care for the success of the institution leads employees to arrive for work on time every day	3.58	.50	Strongly Agree
Cluster Mean		3.38		Agree

Table 1 shows that three of the 10 items on affective commitment listed have mean scores ranging from 3.53 to 3.58, which means that respondents strongly agree that affective commitment influences the performance of administrative staff. The remaining seven statements on affective commitments have mean scores ranging from 3.25 to 3.43, showing that respondents agree that affective commitment influences the performance of administrative staff. The cluster mean score of 3.38 indicates that the respondents agree that affective commitment influences the performance of administrative staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Standard deviations for all the items are within the same range showing that the respondents are not wide apart in their ratings opinions.

Table 2. Summary of t-test Analysis of Significant Difference in the Mean Ratings of Administrative Staff on the Influence of Affective Commitment on their Performance based on age

Age	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t-value	P-value	Decision
18-39 Years	210	3.38	.64	526	.36	.250	Not Significant
40 Years and Above	318	3.48	.55				

Table 6 indicates that the t - value is .36 with 526 degrees of freedom and p-value of .250 which is greater than .05 level of significance. Since the p-value is greater than the significance value (P-value = .25 > .05), the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of administrative staff on the influence of affective commitment on their performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State based on age.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings of the study revealed that administrative staff agree that affective commitment influences their performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The findings corroborate with Renyut et al. (2017) which revealed that affective commitment influenced employee performance. Baştug et al. (2016) reported that affective commitment directly influenced employees' job performance, while Genevičiūtė-Janonienė and Endriulaitienė (2014) noted that affective commitment was the most important component of organizational commitment that influence employees' job performance. The finding of the study could be attributed to the important role that affective commitment plays in enhancing administrative staff's feelings of happiness and emotional attachment to their institutions which can motivate them to make adjustments to further the aims of the institutions. In support of this view, Kassolga (2019) asserted that employees with a high affective commitment stick around because they enjoy the interactions with the schools. Chimona and Dhrub (2015) revealed that affective commitment influenced increased output and staff productivity because committed employees focus on the task at hand and are less likely to leave the organization. In view of this, Abdullah et al. (2017) claimed that affective commitment influenced employees' job performance.

Findings of the hypothesis disclosed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of administrative staff on the influence of affective commitment on their performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State based on age. The findings mean that administrative staff, regardless of their age, agree that affective commitment influences their performance. The findings of the study agree with the finding of Alrowwad et al. (2020), which revealed that age was not a significant factor in the influence of organizational commitment on performance.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study revealed that administrative staff agree that affective commitment influenced their performance. Based on these findings, the researchers concluded that building a working environment that promotes affective commitment can improve the performance of administrative staff of tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Tertiary institutions in Nigeria are established with the aim of producing graduates with requisite technical and non-technical skills that will enable them to contribute to the economic and technological development of the nation. In order to achieve this goal, the management of tertiary institutions must ensure that administrative staff employed in the institutions identify with the goals of the institutions. Therefore, the management must build a working environment that can promote affective commitment among administrative staff in tertiary institution, this can help to improve the performance of administrative staff of tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

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1 Management of tertiary institutions in Nigeria should provide regular organizational support programmes for administrative staff in their quest to better develop themselves in both their personal and career objective so as to improve their affective commitment and job performance.

2 Management of tertiary institutions in Nigeria should pay attention to employee welfare, such as working conditions, job satisfaction, and fringe benefits, and the salaries of the workers should be adequately paid. It will enable the administrative staff to weigh the benefits and drawbacks of staying with that institution; if the loss outweighs the benefits, the employee may be forced to stick to the institution.

3 The Management of tertiary institutions in Nigeria should build a conducive environment that can promote affective commitment among administrative staff in tertiary institution. this can help to improve the performance of administrative staff of tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria.

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